NUMB. XIX.

THE PLAIN DEALER.

Non noſtrum inter Vos tantas Componere Lites.
Et Vitulâ tu dignus, et hic: ——— VIRGIL.

MONDAY, MAY 25. 1724.

I PASS ſome agreable Hours, now and then, at the Houſe of *Sir Portly Rufus*, an Old and wealthy Acquaintance; who lives, a few Miles, out of Town; and having got his Eſtate, by a long, and buſy, Life, ſpent in Trading, adventurouſly, to moſt Parts of the World, is, now, retir'd, from it's Hurry: And enjoys it, with a graceful Eaſe; and undeſigning Hoſpitality. The only Inconvenience, I have, to complain of, when I am with him, is, that the Company, I meet, there, is not ſo delicate, as I cou'd wiſh it: But mix'd, with that Inelegance, which muſt be expected, and ſubmitted to, among Men of Buſineſs: Whoſe Friendſhips are form'd, for the moſt Part, not on Sympathy of Minds; but mutual Commerce of Intereſts.

YET, As there is, always, ſomething to be *learnt*, from the moſt inconſiderable Accidents we can meet with, I never return'd, from Dining, or Supping, with my good Friend, *Sir Portly*, but I brought away with me as ſtrong a Proof, as I cou'd, any where, have met with, That the Reaſon, why, in mix'd Companies, we ſeldom find much Pleaſure, is, becauſe every Perſon, not under ſome immediate Guard, of *Hope*, *Fear*, or *Reverence*, keeps only *Himſelf* in View: And directs his Diſcourſe, and Behaviour, *not* to the Taſte of thoſe he ſhou'd Entertain; but to the particular Bent of his own Humour, or Capacity.

ONE Of the moſt conſtant Gueſts, at *Sir Portly*'s, is *Tony Gingle* his Siſter's Son; who has a great Genius for Poetry. He makes very good Verſes, and Pronounces, gracefully enough, thoſe he repeats, from other Writers, ſo far, all is well. But the worſt of it is, that *Tony* has ſtudied nothing, *but* Poetry. He is quite dark in the uſeful Doctrine of Times, Seaſons, and Places. It is the ſame Thing to *him*, when the Muſe *Bites*, whether he quotes Tragedy, to a Man of Letters, his Taylor's Wife, or a Stockjobber. The Chimes of his Numbers are, forever, ringing in his Fancy: And all, who chance to ſit near him, muſt have their ſhare of the Melody. He has taken it into his Head, that, becauſe he can make a conſiderable Figure, *as a Poet*, there is nothing, in Life, which is conſiderable, *but Poetry!* And it is a very pleaſant Scene to obſerve *Tony* ſtudying, at one of the Tables of a full Coffee Houſe, in the midſt of the City; ſcanning Verſes, on his Fingers: Contriving, writing, and blotting out: And humming them over, to himſelf, with all the Rapture, and Geſticulation, of *Tone*, *Action*, and *Paſſion!* Regardleſs that he is ſtar'd at, and remark'd, all the while, by a dozen or two of thriving Citizens; who ſhake their Heads, and *pity* him; as a Man, that has *loſt* his *Wits*; even while he is under the *Operation* of being *Witty*!—— He has never permitted his Brain to grow cool enough to reflect, That *Wit*, in dull Company, is the dulleſt Subject in the World; and that it is a Folly, to talk of *Homer*, *Horace*, or Mr. *Pope*, among Grave Fellows, within *Ludgate*; who, when they hear of a Great Poet, will tell you a Story of *Tom Brown*; and feel no Difference in the Power of *Tony Gingle*'s own Works, and the humble Labours of their *Bellman*.

JACK Juniper, the Apothecary; and *Tom Tireſom*, the Haberdaſher, living, both, in the ſame Street, ride down, together, twice a Week, to take a Bottle, with my Friend, *Sir Portly*.— *Jack Juniper* reads us Lectures, on the new Improvements in *Botany*, and the Riſe, and Progreſs, of *Inoculation*, which are, acurately, anſwer'd, by Mr. *Thomas Tireſome*; with the Price of the *Stocks*; and the Mournful Decay of the *Spittle-Fields Weaving*. —— As ſoon as this very able Apothecary has open'd, and explain'd, to us, the *Circulation of the Blood*, the punctual Haberdaſher repays his Kindneſs, with the *Courſe of the Exchange*. If ſome *Patient*, of the One, has taken *Phyſick*, for her *Complexion*, ſome Lady, who is the Other's Cuſtomer, has, with equal Advantage to her Skin, fallen into the Wear of his new *Bluſh-Colour*.— But, in the very Heighth of their *Elucidations*, *Tony Gingle* never fails to *wedge in*, between 'em both, ſome ſix Dozen of Quotations, from a Poem, call'd the *Diſpenſary*; though the intelligent Mr. *Juniper* is continually commenting upon it; and interrupting him with the *true Hiſtory* of Every weighty Occurrence, in *Apothecaries-Hall*, which provok'd the Muſe of the merry *Doctor*. While poor *Tom Tireſom*, when he has yawn'd, and liſten'd, in vain, to the full Extent of his Patience, for an Opportunity to grow Eloquent, on the Uſe of *Colcheſter-Bays*, falls aſleep, in his Chair; and *ſnores* at us, in Revenge, to maintain his Part in the Converſation.

HONEST *Sir Portly* wou'd be often at a Loſs, to Shape ſuch ſtubborn *Obliquities*, into any *direct Line* of Society, if he had not, always, at his Elbow, the good-natur'd Mr *William Weathercock*, a Gentleman Farmer, in his Neighbourhood; who has a large, but empty, Underſtanding. — The Mind of *Will. Weathercock* is like the Sail of a great Ship, that has *Room*, to contain much Wind; but, having None, of it's own producing, is ſwell'd out, by Turns, from all the Quarters of the Compaſs. *Will* hits Every Man's Taſte; and is of All People's Opinion. He is ſo deſirous to *Oblige*, that there is not a Point in the *Circumference*, but wou'd ſerve him for a *Center*. He is, this Moment, in *your* Sentiment: and, and the *next*, will, before your Face, be of his Opinion, who contradicts you. But, if a Third affirms you *Both* to have been in the Wrong, and appeals to *Will Weathercock*: —— *Will*, with the beſt-bred Agility in the World, ſhifts, immediately, to *His* Side, too; and thinks it as clear as the Sun that You were, *All Three*, in the Right of it.

THIS Pliable Ductility, in the Reaſon of *Will Weathercock*, hitches in, and chains together, the moſt repugnant Idea's: and, uniting them into an active Body, like the *hook'd Atoms*, of *Des Cartes*, give s'em Strength, Fluidity, and Conſequence. Such a lively Effect have the very *Weakneſſes* of Humanity, beyond the Force, and Subtlety, of Ill Nature, and Self-Intereſt!

TONY

[Price Two-Pence.]

TONY GINGLE, the laſt Time that I ſaw this Company, together, was ſo put to it, for an Opportunity, to repeat ſome Verſes, he was *big with*, that, in Order to *bring 'em in*, with a tolerable Appearace of Propriety, he began, with a ſerious Face, to compliment *Sir Portly*'s Lady, on the Fineneſs of her Shape, and Skin, and inferring, from their being Praiſe-worthy, that they ſhou'd lie open to Obſervation, took Occaſion, by theſe Lines, to enforce his kind Opinion, That it was neceſſary for her, to *go Naked*.

Can Forms, like Yours, want Ornament of Dreſs?
Beauty, like Truth, *ſhines moſt, in* Nakedneſs.
Dreſſing, may skreen Deformities from View:
But, even, Adornment does but ſhadow you!
Moſt, but by what they wear, are lovely made:
You, Madam, loſe, *whene'er you ſeek ſuch Aid.*
While ſome but hide Defects, and dreſs, to arm;
You put off *Nothing, but what* veil'd *a Charm!*

THE Lady bluſh'd, and ſmil'd. *Sir Portly* laugh'd, aloud; and begg'd to hear 'em over again. For my Part, I was doubly pleas'd, with the Turn of the Verſe; and Particularity of the Fancy. *Tony Gingle*, Himſelf, was in Raptures, which he cou'd not hide, at the Applauſe, his Muſe had met with. — But *Tom Tireſome*, who had been weighing, with the Foreſight of a prudent Citizen, the Ill Conſequence of *going, naked*, to his Good Friends, the *Weavers*, felt a commendable Indigdignation, againſt the tuneful *Mr. Gingle*; and, in the Heat of his Reſentment, call'd him *Madman*; and *Ballad-Singer*, — Pray, what do you ſuppoſe, ſaid he, wou'd become of ſo many thouſand honeſt People, who live, by making *Petticoats*, and what *belongs* to Petticoats, if all handſome Women were to go *impudently Naked!* — Out upon it! Methinks I *ſee* 'em; and am aſham'd of you! It is ſcandalous, and indecent; and to ſay Nothing of the *Plot*, which may lie, conceal'd, in it, againſt *Trade*; It is the Whim of a *Heathen Turk*! and not fit to be thought of, in a ſober, *Chriſtian*, Country!

TONY, who, by this Time, had fathom'd the *Depth* of his Antagoniſt, began to play upon him, from his Batteries, of poetical Artillery; and the War was growing hot: and threatened dangerous Conſequences, when *Will. Weather-cock* put in, between 'em, and, taking Part with the *Wit*, becauſe he obſerv'd him to be a Favourite, made this home Charge, upon his Oppoſite, like a brave, and faithful, Auxiliary.

YOU are, certainly, in the right, moſt diverting *Mr. Gingle*! — Nature never wou'd have cover'd Women with ſuch white, and tempting, Skins, if ſhe had not meant 'em for a publick Ornament. The Ladies are Nature's Favourites; and, can we ſuppoſe her to have been leſs liberal, to thoſe *Favourites*; than to the *Beaſts*, which ſhe plac'd below 'em? — She never ſent us a *Calf*, but he came into the World, with his *Coat* on. An *Ox* has no *Breeches* to pull off, when he goes to Bed, weary. The *Lamb* is born, ready dreſs'd, with her Freeze Coat about her. And who, ever, ſaw a *Sow*, drawing off her Shooes, and Stockings? — None ſleep ſofter than the *Birds* do: Yet they riſe, in the Morning, with their Featherbeds, upon their Backs. — The moſt Excellent, of the *Virtues*, are always painted, like *Women*; but it is, like *Women, without Cloaths on*! And, what does this mean, but to inſinuate, to the Sex, That All, who love Virtue, ſhou'd deſpiſe Hoop Petticoats, and *go naked*? — There is this manifeſt Abſurdity, in Women's Dreſſing, that it involves them in Perplexities, which make the chief End, they dreſs for, much more difficult than it need be: For, as they order the Matter, they are to be taken to Peices, like *Watches*, before a Man can come *near* enough, to examine the *Wonders* of their *Workmanſhip*. — *Faſhions* differ, in all Nations; and, what is a fine Dreſs, in one Place, is a frightful One, in another. But, were Women once uncover'd, All Men's Judgments wou'd agree, about 'em. — In a Word, ſince the *Sun*, *Moon*, and *Stars*, appear, as Nature has made 'em; ſince all *Animals* are ſatisfy'd with their own natural Figures; and, ſince the *Roſes* are not aſham'd to ſhow their *Thorns*, with their *Beauties*; why ſhou'd *Woman*, Nature's Maſterpiece! ſeek to hide, or diſguiſe, her Lovelineſs?

WILL went, eloquently, on, after this extraordinary Manner, till he had fully convinc'd, and ſatisfy'd, all that Part of his Audience, who were on this firſt Side the Queſtion. But, caſting his Eye, on poor *Tom Tireſome*, and, pitying the melancholy Air, with which he liſten'd, to an Opinion, he had not Wit enough to argue againſt, though he thought it little Better, than Fornication, and Adultery: — *Will*, in ſimple Honeſty of Heart; and out of a mere Motive of Compaſſion, ſlipt, by a very ſudden Tranſition, into a ſure Method of comforting him; and chang'd his *Level*, as follows.

YET, to do Juſtice to both Arguments, it ſeems plain, beyond Contradiction, That Beauty was *made*, to be *ornamented*. The Peacock's *ſtarry Tail* ſhews, That Nature loves gay Fancies. *Nature* dreſs'd the Hills, and the Meadows, in their fine, embroider'd, Mantles. It was *She*, that ſpangled over all that glorious *Veil*, of Heaven! — Who, but *Nature*, ſpotted the *Ermin*? And *gilt* the ſcaly Skins, of Fiſhes, and of Serpents? — *Man*, indeed, ſhe ſent into the World, plain, and naked: — Not, that ſhe meant, he ſhou'd *remain* ſo, — but, becauſe ſhe *adorn'd* all Things elſe, for His *Reaſon*, to chuſe a Dreſs from. What is the Silkworm, but Nature's little *Spinſter*, ſet to Work for our common Benefit? The very *Spider* keeps a *Loom*; and weaves a finer Manufacture, than the Artiſts, of *Spittle-Fields*, can! — Why ſmell theſe lovely Flowers, round the Summer-Houſe we are ſitting in, ſo delightfully ſweet, and fragrant, but to teach us, That we ſhou'd *perfume* our ſelves? And, to what End can we ſuppoſe they were made, ſo various, in their Colours, but to give Ladies the happy Hint, of employing *Dyers*, and *Silk-Weavers*.

TOM TIRESOME interrupted him, at thoſe two inſpiring Words, with a loud and triumphant *Hallow*; and, filling, inſtantly, *two Bumpers*, drank Proſperity to *Trade*; and Health and Happineſs to *Mr. Weathercock*. — His Toaſts went round the Company; and Both Parties were ſo well ſatisfied, with the Share each had, in his Deciſion, that Neither of them appear'd ſhock'd, at the manifeſt Contradiction of his Reaſoning. But *Tony Gingle* went away, the moſt pleas'd, of the Two; becauſe *Sir Portly* deſir'd him, at parting, to repeat his Verſes, the third Time; and to make another Copy, againſt next Meeting, on the comfortable Uſe of *Swanskin Breeches*, to Ladies, who wear Wide Hoops, in a ſharp, and froſty Winter.

ADVERTISEMENTS.

An *Abſtract* of the *PUBLICK DEBTS* remaining Due at *Michaelmas*, 1722. And an Eſtimate of the Annual Sinking Fund towards the Diſcharge of the ſame; made from the Accounts thereof delivered into *Parliament*. And alſo a Computation in what Time the ſaid *Publick Debts* may be Diſcharged by the ſaid *Sinking Fund*. With a Method propoſed for the more Clear Stating of the ſaid *Publick Debts* and *Sinking Fund* in Accounts hereafter to be deliver'd into *Parliament*. And a Propoſal for putting an End to all *Particular Appropriations*, and turning the *whole Revenue* into *One General Fund*. And likewiſe ſome *Remarks* and *Hints* offer'd to the Conſideration of the Gentlemen of the *Houſe of Commons*, for the Improvement of the *Revenue*, by *Good Husbandry*, and otherwiſe; and relating to ſome other Matters of *Publick Utility*. By ARCHIBALD HUTCHESON, of the *Middle-Temple*, *London*, Eſq; and Member of Parliament for *Haſting* in the County of *Suſſex*.

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